



A Chat with the Principal

Parent Network Meeting
of the
Mendham Township H.S.A.
October 26, 2006

M.T.E.S. – A home for nurturing habits of the heart and the mind

Personal Background



- Clifton Park, NY – Southern Saratoga County
- Policy Studies Major – Syracuse University
- Elementary Education/Political Science Majors – S.U.N.Y. – New Paltz
- Educational Administration & Supervision – Montclair State Univ.



Professional Background



- Spring 1997 - Student teaching – 2nd & 6th Grade
- 1997-98 - Oradell – 5th Grade
- 1998-2005 – Westfield – Jefferson School – 4th & 5th Grade
- 2005-06 – Mountainside – Curriculum Coordinator K-8 / Asst. Principal K-2

Educational Philosophy



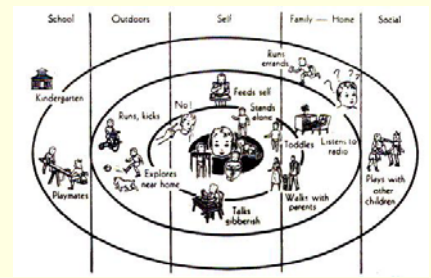
- **Children need to be thinkers**
 - Learn how to learn & thrive as a result of change
- **‘Schooling’ vs. ‘Education’**
 - Creating a curriculum that is meaningful and relevant to students' interests
 - Bringing students in on the process of making decisions about their learning
 - Transforming classrooms into caring communities where students feel safe and connected to others
 - Moving away from traditional evaluation of learning in favor of more constructive and learner-centered approaches to feedback – ‘exhibitions of learning’

Educational Philosophy



- **Move toward enduring, essential understandings**
 - Big ideas, projects, problems, questions
 - Emphasis on depth of understanding, in context, for a purpose
- **“Working with” vs. “doing to” children**
- **Learning is an active process not a passive event**
- **Unconditional acceptance**
- **Teaching all children**

Thoughts on Education



The goal of education is more education.

- *John Dewey*

To be well-educated, then, is to have the desire as well as the means to make sure that learning never ends.

- *Alfie Kohn*

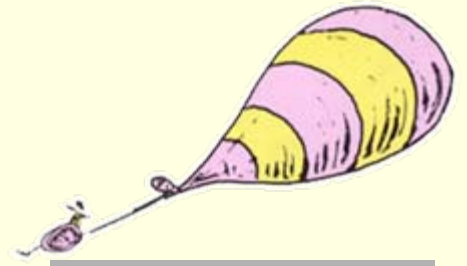
No man who worships education has got the best out of education... Without a gentle contempt for education no man's education is complete.

- *Gilbert K. Chesterton*

Two roads diverged in a wood and I - I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.

- *Robert Frost*

A Thought on Teaching



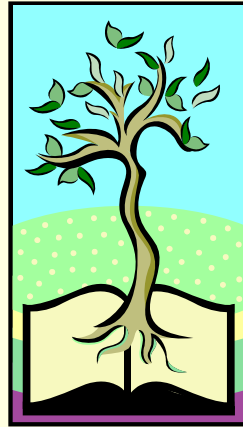
“Good teachers must be truly present in the classroom, deeply engaged with their students and their subjects, and able to weave an intricate web of connections among themselves, their subjects and their students, so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves.”

- Parker Palmer

The Courage to Teach

Building Initiatives

- **Habits of Mind**
- **Discipline with Dignity**
- **Meaningful, integrated, research-based character education with home component**
- **Developmental domains of the elementary school child**
- **Best Practices across subject areas, building community in the classroom and giving children voice**
- **The language of education & learning**



Key Issues of Interest

- Homework
 - [Kohn video](#)
- Supervision
- Enrichment
- Opportunities for parent involvement
- Any others?



Reading to Consider



<i>Emotional Intelligence</i>	Goleman, Daniel
<i>How to Raise a Child with a High EQ</i>	Shapiro, Lawrence
<i>How to Raise Lifelong Learners</i>	Caulkins, Lucy
<i>Overcoming Dyslexia</i>	Shaywitz, Sally
<i>Taking Charge of ADHD: The Complete, Authoritative Guide for Parents (Revised Edition)</i>	Barkley, Russell
<i>Emotionally Intelligent Parenting: How to Raise a Self-Disciplined, Responsible, Socially Skilled Child</i>	Elias, Tobias and Friedlander
<i>Raising Emotionally Intelligent Teenagers: Guiding the Way for Compassionate, Committed, Courageous Adults</i>	Elias, Tobias and Friedlander
<i>Developing More Curious Minds</i>	Barrell, John
<i>Schooling for Life: Reclaiming the Essence of Learning</i>	Brooks, Jacqueline Grenan

Reading to Consider



<i>The Disciplined Mind: Beyond Facts and Standardized Tests, The K-12 Education That Every Child Deserves</i>	Gardner, Howard
<i>Freedom to Learn</i>	Rogers, Carl
<i>The Habits of Mind: A Developmental Series</i>	Costa, A. & Kallick, B.
<i>Teaching for Thoughtfulness: Classroom Strategies to Enhance Intellectual Development</i>	Barrell, John
<i>The Courage to Teach</i>	Palmer, Parker J.
<i>How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience & School</i>	National Research Council
<i>Punished by Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise and Other Bribes</i>	Kohn, Alfie
<i>Unconditional Parenting</i>	Kohn, Alfie
<i>The School's Our Children Deserve: Moving Beyond Traditional Classrooms and 'Tougher Standards'</i>	Kohn, Alfie
<i>The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach</i>	Gardner, Howard
<i>The Myth of Laziness</i>	Levin, Mel